

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 DPW-01 DHA-02 SCS-03 SCA-01
SS-15 PM-05 NSC-05 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 DODE-00
L-03 H-01 EB-08 /073 W
-----000570 291221Z /44

R 290935Z JUL 77
FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8376
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY PARIS
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 1105

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS CASC MILI LA US
SUBJ: US-LAO RELATIONS AND MIA PROBLEMS

1. EA/VLC DIRECTOR BROWN AND I CALLED ON SOMBAT CHOUN-LAMANY, DEPARTMENT NUMBER TWO (DEVELOPED NATIONS), LPDR MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, JULY 28 AND PRESENTED ELEVEN ADDITIONAL CASE DOSSIERS ON AMERICANS MISSING IN ACTION IN LAOS. BROWN REVIEWED HISTORY OF WOODCOCK COMMISSION AND DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OAKLEY VISITS TO VIENTIANE WITH REGARD TO MIA ISSUE. RECOGNIZING DIFFICULTIES LPDR FACED IN CARRYING OUT SEARCHES, BROWN EXPRESSED HOPE THAT LPDR WOULD MAKE VIGOROUS EFFORTS TO OBTAIN MIA INFORMATION AND, WHERE FEASIBLE, RECOVER REMAINS. BROWN UNDERLINED IMPORTANCE WHICH USG ATTACHES TO DOING EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO RESOLVE THIS HUMANITARIAN QUESTION. SOMBAT MADE PRO FORMA REPLY AND OFFERED NO COMMENT OF INTEREST ON EITHER MIA ISSUE OR US-LAO RELATIONS.

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2. ON JULY 29 WE WERE RECEIVED BY VICE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS KHAMPHAY BOUPHA, SUBSTITUTING FOR NOUPHAN SITHPASAY, WHO WAS ORIGINALLY SCHEDULED TO MEET US BUT WHO APPARENTLY IS GENUINELY SICK AND UNAVAILABLE. BROWN EXPLAINED PURPOSE OF HIS VISIT TO LAOS AND SUMMARIZED MIA PRESENTATION. KHAMPHAY RESPONDED WITH STANDARD LPDR LINE, POINTING OUT DIFFI-

CULTY OF MOTIVATING LAO PEOPLE TO SEARCH FOR MIA INFORMATION BECAUSE OF LIVE AMERICAN ORDNANCE IN COUNTRYSIDE WHICH WAS CAUSING DEATH AND INJURIES TO THEM DAILY. MORE IMPORTANT, KHAMPHAY SAID, WAS DIFFICULTY LPDR FACED IN EXPLAINING TO ITS PEOPLE IMPORTANCE OF ADDRESSING THIS HUMANITARIAN PROBLEM IN THE ABSENCE OF EVIDENCE OF "GOOD AMERICAN INTENTIONS". KHAMPHAY SAID THAT DESPITE AMERICAN DECLARATIONS OF GOOD WILL, LAO PEOPLE WERE LOOKING FOR SOMETHING MORE SUBSTANTIAL TO PROVE THAT AMERICA'S ATTITUDE HAS INDEED CHANGED FROM ANTAGONISM TO ONE OF GENUINE CONCERN. THIS, HE SAID, WAS REAL HUMANITARIAN QUESTION, MUCH AS LPDR UNDERSTOOD AMERICAN PREOCCUPATION WITH MIA. KHAMPHAY ALSO REITERATED SEVERAL TIMES CHARGES OF THAI SUPPORT FOR "AGGRESSIVE, REACTIONARY" LAO FORCES AND "COMMANDO OPERATIONS" INTO LAOS FROM THAILAND. HE MADE PLAIN THAT LPDR BELIEVES UNITED STATES IS AT MINIMUM ENCOURAGING ITS THAI ALLIES AND QUITE POSSIBLY MORE DIRECTLY INVOLVED. BROWN REJECTED THESE CHARGES AS ABSOLUTELY UNFOUNDED.

3. WHEN PRESSED ON QUESTION OF WHETHER OR NOT LPDR HAD MADE ANY PROGRESS ON MIA, KHAMPHAY SAID LPDR HAD SET UP MECHANISM TO PROMOTE MIA SEARCH. HE SAID SOME INFORMATION HAD BEEN DEVELOPED AND WAS IN PROCESS OF BEING PULLED TOGETHER. HE DECLINED TO PROVIDE DETAILS, CONFIDENTIAL

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SAYING ONLY THAT THE EMBASSY WOULD BE ADVISED AT THE APPROPRIATE MOMENT.

4. COMMENT: WE FOUND NOTHING FRESH OR UNEXPECTED IN KHAMPHAY'S PRESENTATION. HIS POINTS WERE BASICALLY THOSE MADE TO WOODCOCK COMMISSION AND MORE RECENTLY TO BOB OAKLEY. IT WAS CLEAR THAT THE LAO ARE STILL ASSOCIATING PROGRESS ON MIA ISSUE WITH PROSPECTS FOR FUTURE ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE AND THAT UNTIL SOME HINT IN THIS DIRECTION IS FORTHCOMING, THEY DO NOT FEEL IMPELLED TO EXERT THEMSELVES MIGHTILY. CONTRARY TO HIS USUAL PRACTICE WITH ME, KHAMPHAY SPOKE IN LAO THROUGH INTERPRETER, A YOUNG DIPLOMAT OF THE NEW SCHOOL (PHEUIPHAN NGAOSYVATHN), WITH NOTETAKER ALSO PRESENT.

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Message Attributes

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Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 29-Jul-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
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Handling Restrictions: n/a
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